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Analysis of 1st grade and 5th grade textbooks and primary school students' views about personal traits in gender role in society

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Abstract

This study investigates whether the textbooks used in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) schools carry stereotyped images and whether students view stereotypical representations of gender on personal traits are different with the respect of their gender and grade level. For the aim of this study, the primary 1st and 5th and 17 grade school textbooks were read in detail to find out gender stereotypic representations that matched with the categorie of personal traits. The questionnaire were developed to see the primary 1st and 5th grade students view about gender role releted to personal trait. Female and male are generally represented in a stereotyped way in the school textbooks; The numbers of personal traits representations were evaluated, "being brave", "being dependent", "independent", "clever", "leader", "creative", "supportive", "rich", "hardworking", and "lazy" are for male personal traits. "Beautiful", "sweet", "emotional", "happy", "sad", "surprised" and "friendly" are given for female personal traits according to the school textbooks content. "Active", "passive", "aggressive", and "sensitive" are equal for these two gender representations. Students views with the respect of their gender show the similar results with the textbooks. Female students see most of the personal traits for both gender however male studnts' views reflect the stereotype personal traits in gender roles in society.

Keywords: Gender role, Gender stereotype, Textbooks, Primary school, Personal traits

1. Introduction

Education is the act or process of educating and its results can be determined by among other things the skills and knowledge one acquires. It also encompasses teaching and learning. Furthermore, education makes a relatively permanent change in behaviour that occurs through experience. So it is an opportunity and arguably the most important thing we can do with our lives (Dewey, 1933). It is supposed to give students the necessary knowledge and skills to function effectively in the society in which they live. It has also been defined as the process by which students "develop the knowledge, skill, or character (Yero, 2002)

Education also plays the crucial role of improving social equity and economic development. In addition to that education aids intellectual development, need for better career, employment opportunities, and economic independence for individuals and so forth (Kozma, 2005). Maslak and Singhal (2008) stated that highly educated people get exposed to new ideas, making them challenge the existing norms and behavioral changes more openly than less educated ones.

As a result educated people tend to express themselves better. But it is worth mentioning that education does not only create awareness of the people's rights, it also facilitates the development of individuality and rationality, and encourages the educated people to challenge traditionally constructed gender roles in every area of life.

In general, everyone should have equal right to education. This means that there should not be inequality in access to education irrespective of one's gender and social circumstances. Unfortunately, in many societies especially in developing countries, gender inequalities exist especially against girls and women in every area of life such as in home environment, work environment and even in school environment. Lack of opportunity and inequality may exist especially for girls and women in education either because of their culture or family. Gender inequality in education is present in virtually every society since they are generally caused by cultural and social inequalities. This puts girls and women in society at a serious disadvantage whereby females tend to lag behind men in many walks of social and working life (Rees, 1992; Monk & Garcia-Ramon, 1996; Desai et al., 1999). In each society everyone has his/her own gender identity as either female or male. The concepts of gender and sex have similar meaning. But in general the 'gender role' is defined as a set of perceived behavioral norms associated particularly with females and males in a given social setting (Rice, 2001). Almost all societies have certain differentiations for both genders.

Gender roles relate to how we act as females and males and they are influenced by biology, environment and cognitive development. Gender is also influenced by sex hormones as estrogen represents femininity hormone and testosterone masculinity hormone. Kohlberg (1966) emphasized that a child's self-categorization as a girl and a boy develop their own gender roles. The child develops her/his gender role according to expected sex roles by her/his culture and norms of society which they live in (Rice, 2001). By the time a child enters primary school, she or he is able to distinguish gender roles. They learn appropriate gender roles for girls and boys and women and men through the socialization process of education both in the family and in school. The roles are structured by the society and it is undeniable these stereotyped gender roles are reflected in the educational environment. It is therefore fair to assume that the issue of gender is an essential societal component and one of the functions of the school is to meet the needs of society as it respects and reinforces its pertinent cultural aspects. If a society is to move past traditional gender role reinforcers then it needs to re-examine gender stereotype roles in the school curricula.

In schools, it is important to bring issues of gender representation in textbooks as textbooks will influence learners. Gender roles are acquired through experience; it is this that construct an individual as either feminine or masculine (Bem, 1981). Furthermore, they refer to the attitudes and behaviors that class a person's stereotypical identity, for example the women cook and clean, but men fix cars and work in the garden. So in order to associate one as either masculine or feminine it is identified with gender (Mkuchu, 2004).

During the primary education period, primary school is the place for children to learn knowledge besides that they learn appropriate gender roles from their teachers, peers and textbooks. The primary school period is essential period on children's development cognitively and socially. What the primary school children see in those textbooks or what they experience from their classmates and teachers will be effective children's views of stereotypical ways of behaviors, roles. This is relevance of gender to education comes in. Textbooks should be prepared in order to meet all the needs for both female and male students. But every society has different gender stereotype expectations and values, which is reflected in textbooks by educational practitioners, with prior intent to serve those differences among individuals by bringing unequal manner of dealing with female and male students into education. It is worth mentioning that guidance children about their gender roles in accordance with those defined by any society has been accepted as the most important issue of education. Also, gender roles in textbooks reflect the development of society between women and men. In their studies, Rees (1992), Monk and Garcia (1996) and Desai et al. (1999) argue that even if both girls and boys have equal chance to study, the textbooks that girls and boys use may contain gender stereotypes representations that promote gender inequality. It is undeniable that gender inequality is an issue in the educational environment.

Therefore, it is important to examine the children's literature and school textbooks which are important agents in children's and students' live. The books are role models for young children. The socialization of the school child could be through the contents of textbooks. Books reflect cultural values, norms and they are important instruments for prescription to young children to accept and learn those appropriate gender roles that exist in their own community. Some countries or regions, especially developing countries, have customs and values (whether these are backward or progressive is not for this study to say) that describe what women and men do or what kind of opportunities they should have in ways that discriminate on the basis of gender. Researchers found that when compared with men, women are poorer and have fewer opportunities to fulfill their educational potential, and their circumstances are significantly more difficult in some parts of the world than in others (Richburg, Nelson & Tochterman, 2002). It could be the reason that existence of gender disparity in every area of life could be reflected in the children's literature and school textbooks.

Actually, the examples of the presentation style of female characters in textbooks examined through Helvacioğlu's study (1996) is one indicator of how teaching materials deliberately affect childrens' views about their appropriate gender roles. Home is shown as the best place for a the 'woman' and it will probably be the best choice for her daughter, too. Besides that, teachers tend to have different attitudes towards girls and boys students. Some of them always accept girl students as passive and hardworking but not as intelligent as the boy students although there is no scientific evidence found regarding sex difference in IQ levels (Francis, 1976).

Discrimination about both gender is typical within the economic, social, political, and even linguistic structures of many societies. Traditional stereotyped roles or prevailing norms about what women and men do, and how their activities, occupations, personal traits, and roles are to be valued since they determine the opportunities to which all they have access (Subrahmanian, 2005). Under this framework of the literature, the present study investigates whether the textbooks used in Cypriot primary 1st grade and 5th grade textbooks carry stereotyped images and students views about stereotypical gender roles in society. The study distinguishes personal traits to see how female and male roles are represented in those school textbooks. The study investigated that students who enrolled at primary school encounter stereotyped personal traits of female and male in the textbooks of different grades. The opportunity that presents itself for this study is that there is very little literature regarding the analysis of textbooks especially in the context of the TRNC. Sheldon (1988) confirms that many educators are not even aware the importance of choice of textbooks on the effects of children's future life. Therefore, it is important to investigate gender representation in primary school textbooks in the TRNC as the textbooks may influence the young learners' way of thinking about gender. That is why in the present study researcher also focused on students views about gender roles in the society in the context of personal traits.

This study is important because curriculum developers, teachers, parents need to consider what the choice of a textbooks might bring about. The representation of gender roles in primary textbooks reflect the development of society towards equality between two gender groups: women and men. In order to create a equal opportunities between the two genders, the school textbooks need to be discussed. In TRNC, there are limited sources to know about textbooks contents. This study examines the gender stereotyped disparity in the TRNC education system. The study is unique and important to understand underrepresentation of girls and women, boys and men regarding their gender in primary school textbooks. Also, this study considers the primary 1st and 5th grade students' views. The main focus in this study is how central roles are given differently for both genders in textbooks as they relate to differences in personal traits

The purpose of this study is firstly, to examine how gender role in terms of personal traits is equitably distributed for both girls and boys in primary schools textbooks and secondly, to analyze students' views about gender roles in society with respect to their grade level and gender. This study aims both to look at the representation of gender and gender roles in personal traits in primary schools textbooks and see the differentiation between primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks.

Following from the problems discussed above, the study postulates two main research questions:

1. What is the distribution of gender roles in society in the category of personal traits in the primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks?
2. Is there any significant difference in students' views related to gender roles in society in the category of personal traits with respect to their *gender*?

2. Method

This study's research design is reliable enough to answering research questions and valid for analysis. This study combines both qualitative and quantitative research method by analyzing the representations of gender roles in primary school textbooks used in 1st and 5th of 2008-2009 academic year, and quantitative research method by analyzing the primary 1st and 5th grades students views towards gender role in the category of personal traits representations in those school textbooks.

The primary 1st and 5th grade and 17 school textbooks were read in detail to find out gender stereotypic representations that matched with the categorie of personal traits. Cohen et al. (2005) argue that content analysis involves the reading and the evaluation of data collection. Brenner et al. (1985) set out procedures that the researcher should follow in order to categorize the data in the content of book, using some coding, as well as picking up all the clues related to the purpose of the research question. The parts of those school textbooks analyzed and later

questionnaire developed related to content of primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks for students in order to see their view of gender roles in the society.

2.1. Sample and Instrument

For this study, a total of 17 textbooks were chosen from Turkish Cypriot primary schools in. The textbooks analyzed were those used in the 2008 – 2009 academic year in a primary school in Famagusta.

The school textbooks were prepared by Ministry of Education in TRNC. The researchers have collected those primary textbooks as a first research instrument for the content analysis. The second instrument was the questionnaire which has been developed according to the content analyses of primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks and literature review of research work done by other researchers about gender stereotyped distributions in children literature and children school textbooks. Before analyzing the school textbooks, the researchers have formed a checklist to collect data from those school textbooks. And in the light of that checklist, questionnaire has been developed to collect data from students. For the purpose of this study, the categorie of personal traits was designed by the researchers. More specifically; in the preparation process of categorization of gender roles used for textbooks and furthermore the researcher developed questionnaire to find out student's views about gender role related to personal traits.

For this study, out of 30 primary schools, 20 primary schools have been chosen randomly. The population of this study comprised the schools of primary education in TRNC. Twenty primary schools were chosen randomly from Famagusta. The schools chosen were 10 from the urban area and 10 from the rural area.

In Famagusta, the total number of the students were 1770 primary 1st and 5th grade students, 872 of them were 1st grade and 898 of them were 5th grade students. The population under investigation includes 248 students in primary 1st and 5th grade students. Forty-nine were female students and 64 were male students all were chosen randomly from 1st grade. 58 female students and 67 male students were chosen from the 5th grade. 123 of them randomly chosen from 1st grade and 125 of them were randomly chosen from 5th grade. In simple random sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2001).

The research is conducted a pilot study to assess the reliability of the questionnaire which was used for this study. Oppenheim, Morrison, Wilson and McLean 1998, as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005) remarks that piloting the questionnaire increases reliability, validity and practicability. Sixty primary school students participated for pilot study. According to the results after Chronbach's Alpha test was conducted, the alpha is .7207 It could be indicated that the questionnaire which is developed for this research has a reliability. The researchers focused on the categorie of personal traits, which girls and boys, women and men do according to the textbooks representations.

The numerical representations were done in order to see the reflections of female and male presentations and roles which are given in school textbooks written for 1st and 5th grade of primary school children (Table 2).

Table 2: *Category of personal traits used for gender role representation in 1st and 5th grades textbooks analzed*

Personal Traits		
Supportive	Sad	Aggressive
Dependent	Surprised	Emotional
Happy	Friendly	Beatiful
Independent	Rich	Creative
Active	Lazy	Sweet
Passive	Sensitive	Leader
Clever	Hardworking	

The questionnaire was filled by the researcher as the 1st grade students answer the questions, and the questionnaires for primary 5th grade students were filled by the students themselves for the data analysis process of this study.

2.2. Analysis

The results obtained at the end of the analysis were the frequencies tables prepared in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The two variables were 1st and 5th grade level and students view's (answers were coded by 1 female, 2 male and 3 both). Then the data was analyzed using frequency table to find out for distribution of numbers and percentage of gender role representations for evaluated according to each textbooks for 1st and 5th grades, the percentages of female and male gender role representations differed or not from each other and also, Mann-Whitney U test conducted in this study. Besides that, for the analysing students views two-way contingency table analysis used with crosstabs to find out significant difference in sutudents' views related to gender roles in society with respect to their gender.

3. Findings and Results

The study attempt to find out the stereotypic gender roles representations that Primary school students are exposed to by analyzing their school textbooks. Eight primary 1st grade school textbooks and nine primary 5th grade school textbooks were analyzed. When the numbers and the percentage of stereotyped gender role representations were evaluated according to each textbooks for 1st and 5th grades, the numbers and the percentages of female stereotyped and male stereotyped role representations differed from each other.

Table 2: Frequency table for the personal traits according to students' grade level and gender

Grade	F		M		B		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 st Grade	14	52	11	41	2	7	27	100
5 th Grade	13	23	32	57	11	20	56	100
Total	27	32	43	52	13	16	83	100

The total **personal traits** representations in 1st grade textbooks is 52 % for female, 41 % for male and 7 % for both gender. The total percentage of personal traits representations in the 5th grade textbooks is 23 % for female, 57 % for male, and 20 % for both gender. The frequency table results revealed that categories of personal traits are given for male (52 %) more than female (32 %) and both gender (16 %) according to the contents of primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks.

Table 3: A two-way contingency table analysis results for category of personal traits with respect to students' gender

Category of Personal Traits	Pearson Chi-square	p value (Alpha)	Cramer's V
Brave	105	.000*	.65
Dependent	6.2	.045*	.15
Independent	26.4	.000*	.32
Active	4.4	.035*	.13
Passive	123	.000*	.45
Clever	51.5	.000*	.57
Leader	57.7	.000*	.48
Creative	83.1	.000*	.57
Beatiful	59.2	.000*	.48
Sweet	8.6	.013*	.18
Aggressive	61.6	.000*	.49
Emotional	33.3	.000*	.36
Supportive	36.9	.000*	.38
Happy	8.5	.014*	.18
Sad	55.5	.000*	.47
Surprised	4.1	.127	.12

Friendly	1.1	.572	.06
Rich	45.9	.000*	.43
Lazy	26.8	.000*	.32
Hardworking	28.4	.000*	.33
Sensitive	28.6	.000*	.34

The results revealed that there is *no significant differences* between students views with regarding to students' **gender**, about being surprised and friendly. But, there is *significant differences* on students views about being brave, dependent, independent, active, passive, clever, leader, creative, beautiful, sweet, aggressive, emotional, supportive, happy, sad, surprised, friendly, rich, lazy, hardworking and sensitive;

Brave: Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 105, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .65 represent big effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being brave. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being brave is 7 % of female personal traits, 33 % of male and 60 % both. male students views on being brave is 2 % of female personal traits, 95 % of male, and 3 % of both. **Dependent:** students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 6.2, $p= .045$. Cramer's V of 15 represent small effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being dependent. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being dependent is 41 % of female traits, 24 % of male traits and 35 % both. 5th grade students views on being dependent is 55 % of female traits, 14 % of male, and 31 % of both. **Independent:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 26.4, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .32 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being independent. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being independent is 65 % of male traits, and 35 % both. male students views on being independent is 92 % of male, and 8 % of both. **Active:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 4.4, $p= .035$. Cramer's V of .13 represent small effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being active. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being active is 74 % of male traits and 26 % of both. Male students views on being active is 62 % of male, and 38 % of both. **Passive:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 123, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .45 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being passive. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being passive is 9 % of female traits, 24 % of male trait, and 67 % of both traits. male students views on being passive is 78 % of female trait and 22 % of both trait. **Clever:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 51.5, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .57 represent big effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being clever. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being clever is 8 % of female traits, 4 % of male traits, and 88 % of both traits. Male students views on being clever is 40 % of male trait, and 59 % of both trait. **Leader:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 57.7, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .48 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being leader. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being leader is 48 % of female traits and 52 % of both traits. Male students views on being leader is 91 % of female trait, and 8 % of both trait. **Creative:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 83.1, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .57 represent big effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being creative. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being creative is 40 % of female traits, 25 % of male and 35 % of both traits. Male students views on being creative is 1 % of female trait, 77 % of male and 21 % of both trait. **Beautiful:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 59.2, $p= .000$. Cramer's V of .48 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being beautiful. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being beautiful is 75 % of female traits, and 25 % of both traits. Male students views on being beautiful is 77 % of female trait, and 22 % of male trait. **Sweet:** Students gender

and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 8.6, $p = .013$. Cramer's V of .18 represent small effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being sweet. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being sweet is 99 % of female traits, and 1 % of both traits. Male students views on being sweet is 91 % of female traits, 1 % of male trait and 8% of both traits. **Aggressive:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 61.6, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .49 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being aggressive. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being aggressive is 100 % of male traits. Male students views on being aggressive is 59 % of male trait, 41 % of both traits. **Emotional:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 33.3, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .36 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being emotional. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being emotional is 99 % of female traits, and 1 % both traits. Male students views on being emotional is 73 % of female trait, 2 % of male traits 24 % of both traits. **Supportive:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 36.9, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .38 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being supportive. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being supportive is 99 % of female traits and 1 % both traits. Male students views on being supportive is 71 % of female trait, 5 % of male traits and 24 % of both traits. **Happy:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 8.5, $p = .014$. Cramer's V of .18 represent small effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being happy. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being happy is 19 % of female traits, 3 % of male trait, and 78 % both traits. Male students views on being happy is 35 % of female trait, 4 % of male traits and 61 % of both traits. **Sad:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 55.5, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .47 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being sad. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being sad is 86 % of female traits, 7 % of male trait, and 7 % both traits. Male students views on being sad is 44 % of female trait, 6 % of male trait and 50 % of both traits. **Rich:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 45.9, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .43 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being rich. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being rich is 20 % of female traits, 68 % of male trait, and 11 % both traits. Male students views on being rich is 61 % of male trait and 40 % of both traits. **Lazy:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 26.8, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .32 represent big effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being lazy. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being lazy is 15 % of female traits, 45 % of male trait, and 39 % both traits. Male students views on being lazy is 23 % of female traits, 15 % of male trait and 62 % of both traits. **Hardworking:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 28.4, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .33 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being hardworking. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being hardworking is 15 % of female traits, 78 % of male trait, and 7 % both traits. Male students views on being hardworking is 16 % of female traits, 50 % of male trait and 34 % of both traits. **Sensitive:** Students gender and students views were found to be significantly related, pearson χ^2 (N= 248) = 28.6, $p = .000$. Cramer's V of .34 represent medium effect size, respectively. According to Chi-square tests results, there is significant difference according to female and male students views about being sensitive. According to female students crosstabulation the students agreed that being sensitive is 83 % of female traits, 7 % of male trait, and 10 % both traits. Male students views on being sensitive is 62% of female trait, 1 % of male trait, and 37 % of both traits.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

One of the three main questions of this study is to know, whether primary school textbooks being used at 1st and 5th grades in 2008-2009 academic year of a primary schools placed in Famagusta contain stereotyped gender role representations or not and to see views of primary school students who used those textbooks. The primary 1st and 5th grade levels and 17 school textbooks were read in detail to find out gender stereotypic representations with the category of personal traits. The investigation involves counting how often females and males representations fall into the category of personal traits.

The findings of the first research question revealed that the percentage of male gender role representation for the category of personal trait is higher than the percentage of female representation for the same category. These findings are similar to the research done by Holmqvist and Gjörup (2006), their research examined twenty four textbooks and their conclusion was that some textbooks are quite stereotypical and could be perceived as discriminatory. Some of textbooks even do not have a single female representation.

Evaluation of the numbers of **personal traits** representations revealed that, on the one hand, masculine traits such as being brave, being dependent, independent, clever, leader, creative, supportive, rich, hardworking, and lazy, were found in males only. On the other hand, feminine traits such as beautiful, sweet, emotional, happy, sad, surprised and friendly were found in females only. Active, passive, aggressive, and sensitive personal traits were equally represented for both genders. This also echoes the work of Weitzman et al. (1972) and Farber (1978) who noted that females were typically shown dependent, passive, physically attractive.

The findings of the other question revealed that there is positive correlation between the views of male and female students with respect to their gender on the category of **personal traits**. Concerning items of personal traits positive correlation was found on being brave, dependent, independent, active, passive, clever, leader, creative, beautiful, sweet, aggressive, emotional, supportive, happy, sad, rich, lazy, hardworking, and sensitive.

According to male students; being brave, independent, active, creative, rich and hardworking are personal traits. Their views about female personal traits are; being dependent, passive, leader, beautiful, sweet, emotional, supportive and sensitive. Being clever, happy, sad and lazy are defined for both gender personal traits (Weitzman et al., 1972).

In this study female students have same views about male personal traits; being independent, active, aggressive, rich and hardworking except being brave and creative, being brave, passive, clever leader are female personal traits whereas being brave is for both gender. Female students' views about female personal traits are the same like male students' views; being dependent, beautiful, sweet, emotional, supportive, sad and sensitive. In addition, they see themselves as a creative person (Bereaud, 1975; Erozkhan, 2009).

It could be sad that all female and male students in this study have similar views about personal traits for both gender. It shows that students perception about personal traits with respect to gender have been affected in culture where students live and also their education which they use those textbooks. Hannigan (1990) stated that even skills, behaviours and traits are related to the culture. The views of children affected by cultural values about gender roles. Leader and aggressiveness were represented as male's personal traits in those analysed primary 1st and 5th grade textbooks. This correlates with the results from the students' views on personal traits.; aggressiveness is found to be men's personal traits according to the students views and textbooks. Likewise, beautiful and sweet were women's personal traits according to the textbooks and the students' gender (Kingston and Lovelace, 1978).

The findings pointed out above show that female personal traits seem to be more weak (being dependent, passive, emotional, sensitive, sad) than male personal traits. Male personal traits seem to be strong and powerful (Being brave, active, rich, hardworking, aggressive) This also supported by the work of Brugilles et al., (2002) who noted that females were typically shown dependent, passive, physically attractive.

5. Suggestion

There is no gainsaying that people are naturally born as female or male in terms of the biological differentiation of the sexes. However, gender as a construct and use in role classification has attracted attention in all walks of life but even moreso in academia. In the literature there is almost a unanimous agreement that gender roles are learned during the early years of childhood. This is done through socialization in the home, in the school and in society at large. According to the literature, three major agencies of socialization contribute to gender role formation in children:

agency of home, school and society at large. Also, as submitted earlier, there are innate categories that contribute to gender roles but which are not part of this study. For example: innate roles like giving birth are not learned but naturally given. Therefore, the main focus of this study is on gender roles stereotypes that are learned through the agency of school.

As mentioned above, children learn appropriate gender roles from several different sources. The first source is family (home); mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers are influential based on learning appropriate gender roles, attitudes or behaviors. The second source is school. In the school environment, gender roles are learned mostly through the textbooks. Generally, stereotyped gender roles are in the differentiations in personality traits in textbooks. Through textbooks, the children learn appropriate and inappropriate gender roles for females and males.

If these sources (textbooks) are too important in the development of children's gender identity, the stakeholders; families and decision makers especially those in the education sector should unlearn the negative stereotypes in gender representation in textbooks and other media. A double-edged sword can easily be seen in this provision: schools influence and are influenced by what is in real life. The larger society or community apportions gender roles between males and females (although these may be more entrenched in some societies than others). By the same token, the school textbooks most often than not endorse these 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' gender roles by society. That being the case, it is still quite necessary to explore the benefits non gender stereotyped textbooks with equally distributed roles, activities, characters and positions can proffer students.

It is important to point that stereotyped gender roles are harmful for both women and men. The present research and other previous researches argue that textbooks include, whether implicitly or explicitly, stereotyped different role models for female and male. It should be stressed therefore that schools and textbooks be made to develop students intellectually through critical thinking. Textbooks which present female and male stereotypically certainly fail to serve well on the intellectual development of children. Such textbooks limit girls and boys' career opportunities, activities, behaviours, and even their personal and social lives. Already gender discriminations start at an early age. By the time girls and boys enter school, they are already aware of stereotyped gender roles according to their gender. However, the role of schools is to enlighten and not to reinforce untested and unqualified assumptions with regards to differentiating gender roles in the pages of school textbooks.

The merit of this study is that it draws attention to the availability of females and males' gender role stereotypes in textbooks in the TRNC and advocates for an equal representation of gender in textbooks of schools in the TRNC. In this context, this study may open the avenue for further studies relating to school curriculum which has significant role in gender role development of female and male roles. But more importantly the findings of this study, originate awareness for decision and policy makers of stereotyped gender role existence in education carried out via textbooks and students' views and negative reflections on choosing textbooks which has present women and men with stereotypically.

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